

sponsored by the Alliance For Representative Democracy and co-hosted by the four leaders of the U.S. Congress.

The conference established State delegations that returned to their States to advocate for better civic education. I would like to recognize Cindy Coker and Paul Horne, the facilitators of the South Carolina action team, for their efforts to improve civic education in South Carolina in the tradition of Sara Bookhart at the High School of Charleston in 1964.

The South Carolina action team activities include advocating civic education programs and curricula, hosting a conference on the civic mission of schools, participating in the review of social studies standards, which includes civic education, and providing input on the value of civic education on the State's school report card.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking all of the participants of the Congressional Conference on Civic Education and wishing them further success during their next conference in December.

In conclusion, may God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

REPORTS DISCOVERED ON IRAQ

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today the New York Times uncovered two classified reports prepared for President Bush in the months leading up to the war in Iraq. These documents warned the President that "an American-led invasion of Iraq would result in a deeply divided Iraqi society prone to violent internal conflict." Officials told the Times that a second report warns of a possible insurgency, saying the rogue elements from Saddam Hussein's government could work with existing terrorist groups or act independently to wage guerrilla warfare.

Sounds exactly like the situation our U.S. troops face today in Iraq. Unfortunately, President Bush and his administration did not listen to these warnings. Vice President CHENEY said we would be greeted with flowers, and President Bush egged insurgents on by telling them to "bring it on."

Today's report is just another example of the President's failed policies in Iraq. He had a flawed rationale for going to war. He did not have a plan to win the peace. He failed to implement his reconstruction plans for Iraq, leaving the country in chaos. And now we learn that he ignored intelligence estimates that warned of problems after the fall of Baghdad. The world cannot afford another 4 years of this failed leadership.

POLL FINDS MEDIA BIAS

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week no single media organization will receive the media bias award. However, the public has made clear its views of the media as an institution. The American people feel standards of journalism have eroded. Advocacy has replaced objectivity.

After conducting an opinion poll, the Gallup organization recently found that fewer than half of Americans have confidence in the media's ability to fairly report the news. And an astounding three times as many people believe the media is more liberal than conservative. To quote Gallup, "Media Credibility Reaches Lowest Point in Three Decades."

Mr. Speaker, what we should expect from the media, as both Americans and consumers of news, are the facts, objectively and fairly reported.

HEALTH CARE COSTS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, in the last 4 years the Republican majority of this House and the Bush administration have failed to address the skyrocketing cost of health care. Today's news shows this problem has rapidly deteriorated into a crisis.

Let me quote The Washington Post: "Higher Costs, Less Care. Nationwide, workers' cost for health insurance has risen by 36 percent since 2000, dwarfing the average 12.4 percent increase in their wages since President Bush took office."

In a study by Families USA, they found the cost of health care increased three times what the average household's earnings have increased since the year 2000; 14.3 million Americans are now spending more than a quarter of their income on medical costs, an increase of 2.7 million people. There are 5 million fewer jobs providing health benefits, and small businesses are seeing the sharpest decline. This is a problem that affects every middle-class family in the Nation.

Today, we have cancer patients who determine for themselves whether their chances of survival are good enough to invest in the more effective and expensive treatments because they do not want to burden their family with costs.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of a health care crisis. This administration and this Republican majority have nothing to say about it and have thwarted efforts to bring down those costs.

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FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN THE PULPIT

(Mr. PEARCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, this weekend I attended the dedication of a new sanctuary service at Church on the Move in Roswell, New Mexico. As I sat there watching the efforts of Pastor Troy Smotherman come to a culmination of just building his congregation and extending it, I thought of the labors of all pastors across the country, like Dr. Dean Mathis whom my wife and I have studied with for over 20 years, and realize that the work of these good and decent individuals to exhort their members toward justice, kindness, peace, faith, love and just quiet living of decent lives is indeed a tribute to this Nation.

It is entirely appropriate that, at this point where we are going to discuss the Federal marriage amendment on the floor of the House in front of the people, that we recognize that these quiet ministers building congregations across the country do not have the right or the freedom to speak from their pulpits about this very important subject.

Mr. Speaker, I would recommend and request that the House and the Senate consider the language that stifles conversation from the pulpits of this Nation.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISSA) laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 28, 2004.
Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 28, 2004 at 9:37 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H. Con. Res. 161.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH, *Clerk of the House.*

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 11 of rule X, clause 11 of rule I, and the order of the House of December 8, 2003, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence to fill the existing vacancy thereon:

Mr. THORNBERRY, Texas.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair